

I am writing to register my disbelief at the decision to phase out regulation of "line sharing" between local carriers and third party competitors.

I have been an ADSL user for over 5 years and I must say that I WOULD NOT have been if it were not for third party providers. My local phone companies have never been concerned about providing me any sort of broadband service.

When I was living in San Francisco and first attempted to get ADSL from Pacific Bell, I was told that while the line run was short enough to allow me to have ADSL, there were problems with the lines that made it impossible for me to actually get service. I was told that there was nothing Pacific Bell could do, and that I would have to continue with my expensive ISDN line that I had from Pacbell (A service that cost more than the 10x faster ADSL service). Frustrated, I contacted Covad, a third party competitor that served my area. I was told that yes, I could get service, and that any problems with the line would be taken care of (by Pacbell!)

Because Covad was far more expensive than Pacific Bell at the time, I called Pacbell again, explained the situation, told them that they had a choice of either conditioning the line and keeping a customer, or losing a customer, and conditioning the line anyway. After going through several layers of managers they finally admitted that they could in fact fix it, and would. Without competition, this would not have happened.

Six months ago I moved to Colorado Springs, and called local carrier Qwest, and tried to order an ADSL line. I was told that while I could get a line, it would only be at 128K, and that there was nothing Qwest could do to improve the line quality. The price would be the same as their 1.5mbps service.

Again, I called Covad, who offered me an ADSL line at 1.5mb downstream, and 384K upstream for slightly more than the price of the Qwest connection. This time I took Covad up on their offer, and have received service that is more reliable and faster than that I received from PacBell in San Francisco.

By removing the requirement and regulation of line sharing, the FCC has removed a critical form of competition - one that has provided me, as a consumer, with leverage and options when my local carriers were not interested in providing with services.

You have done a great disservice to the American consumer, and set back the growth of broadband services at reasonable prices for all.